



**Governor's Advisory Council for Exceptional Citizens (GACEC)**  
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**MEMORANDUM**

**DATE:** May 30, 2023

**TO:** The Honorable Members of the Delaware General Assembly

**FROM:** Erik Warner, Vice Chairperson  
GACEC

**RE:** **House Bill No. 4 with House Amendment 2/Mental Health Services for School Trauma**

The Governor's Advisory Council for Exceptional Citizens (GACEC) has reviewed **House Bill No. 4**, which proposes to amend §3581 of Title 14 of the Delaware Code, adding language to detail mental health services for school-connected traumatic events. Council **supports** the original bill and had planned to ask that the definition of school-connected traumatic events be expanded. We were very pleased to see the addition of House Amendment 2 on May 16, which expands the definition and increases the amount of time provided for grief counseling. Council supports the expanded definition and other improvements noted in House Amendment 2.

Council agrees that "...the death of a student or a staff member can largely impact the entire community." Students and staff who have "experienced a death in their school community or other traumatic event need space for grieving, supports for healing from trauma and developmentally appropriate interventions. The amendment's synopsis states that the Act is Nolan's Law and its purpose is to provide more supports to school districts after a school-connected traumatic event. Preparing policies targeted at school-connected trauma will help schools and community cope with a loss. It will help Delaware schools to become more trauma-informed and prepared for school-connected traumatic events; ensuring effected students and staff will have more resources in place.

Thank you for the opportunity to share our support of this legislation with you. Please feel free to contact me or Pam Weir at the GACEC office should you have any questions.